

MFP certification deadline extended to May 17

by Justin Walker
Farmers now have until May 17 to certify crop production for payments through the Market Facilitation Program (MFP).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) extended the deadline due to heavy rainfall and snowfall that delayed harvest in several areas throughout the U.S., preventing farmers from certifying production.

MFP payments are intended to help farmers and ranchers who have been significantly affect by foreign tariffs, resulting in the loss of traditional exports. To date, more than \$3.3 billion has been paid to nearly 600,000 applicants.

Payments are issued based on certified total production of the MFP commodity multiplied by the MFP rate for that specific commodity. MFP commodities include corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans, wheat, dairy, hogs, fresh sweet cherries and shelled almonds.

FSA will only issue payments to eligible farmers and ranchers who certify before the new May 17 deadline.

“Trade issues, coupled with low commodity prices and recovery from natural disasters, have definitely impacted the bottom line for many agricultural producers,” FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce said. “The MFP payments provide short-term relief from retaliatory tariffs to supplement the traditional farm safety net, helping agricultural producers through these difficult times. Weather conditions this fall, winter and early spring have blocked many producers from completing harvest of their crops, and we want to make sure producers who want to finalize their MFP application have an opportunity.”

Certification can be done by contacting your local FSA office or through farmers.gov.

FSA implemented MFP in September 2018 as a relief strategy to protect farmers while the administration works on free, fair and reciprocal trade deals to open more markets to help American farmers compete globally.

Celebrating and Protecting National Parks

When visiting one of the stunningly diverse 419 national park sites nationwide, experts say it is important to recognize the individuals who have spoken up over the decades to protect and enhance these incredible places, as well as the work that is still needed.

“It’s difficult to imagine what the U.S. would be like without the Grand Canyon or the Great Smoky Mountains or the Statue of Liberty. National parks offer more than hiking paths, beachfronts and mountaintops,” says Theresa Pierno, president and CEO of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). “We find a sense of identity and inspiration in these treasured places. They speak to

who we are as Americans.” Additionally, national parks offer veterans, active-duty members and their families places of solace, healing and reflection, while honoring their service. More than a quarter of our national park sites commemorate military history, from Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, to places such as Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks, where Buffalo Soldiers were the first park rangers.

National parks don’t exist as they do today by accident. Today, Florida Panthers still roam in Florida’s Everglades; hikers in Joshua Tree don’t gaze at what would have been the country’s largest landfill; and the country’s diverse and shared history is celebrated in national parks, from Cesar Chavez to Birmingham to Stonewall, thanks to the work of conservationists, including NPCA.

For 100 years, NPCA has served as a fearless defender of national parks. The idea for NPCA came at the urging of the first National Park Service director, Stephen Mather and his colleague, Robert Sterling Yard, who believed that national parks needed a voice, separate from the federal government, whose sole responsibility was to protect and enhance them for present and future generations.

“The earliest park advocates shared a goal that lives on today, of ensuring the wonder of these places is preserved,” says Pierno. Each of us serves as beneficiaries of their vision and action. Now it’s our turn to ensure that 100 years from now, people will still be able to watch Old Faithful erupt at Yellowstone, learn about the history of our democracy at Independence Hall and stand in amazement as brown bears wade into Brooks Falls searching for fish at Katmai in Alaska.”

Unfortunately, national parks continue to face threats, including pollution that is harming their air and water, climate change, energy development, inadequate federal funding and a list of repair needs that is nearly \$12 billion across the entire National Park System. Experts say that parks are also threatened by attempts to derail policies and laws meant to protect these treasured places -- from carving up national monuments for development to fast-tracking oil and gas leasing in and near some of America’s last truly wild places. To learn more, visit npca.org/100.

“We need our national parks, and they need us to stand up and be a voice,” says Pierno.

SHOP
LOCAL
Please
Support
Your
Hometown
Businesses!



Rattlesnake! A young man participating in the community service program was bitten by this young rattlesnake while working outside the Coke County Courthouse Tuesday evening, April 23, 2019.

Water Weekly

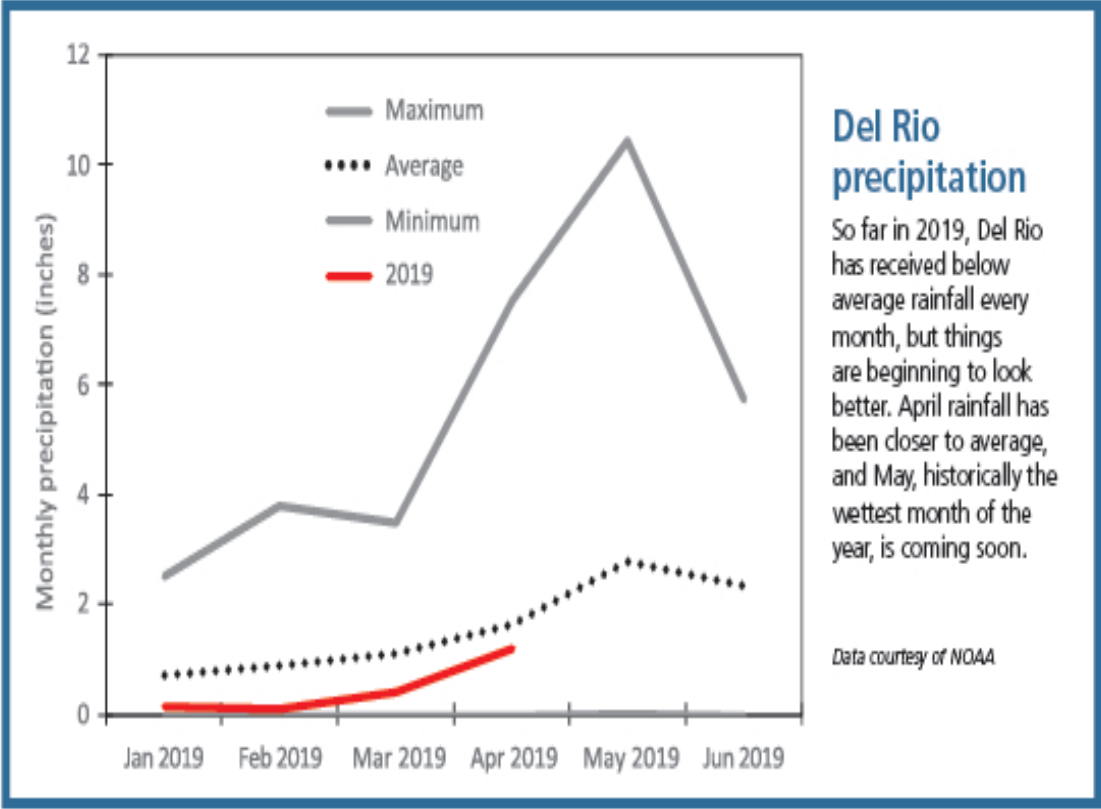
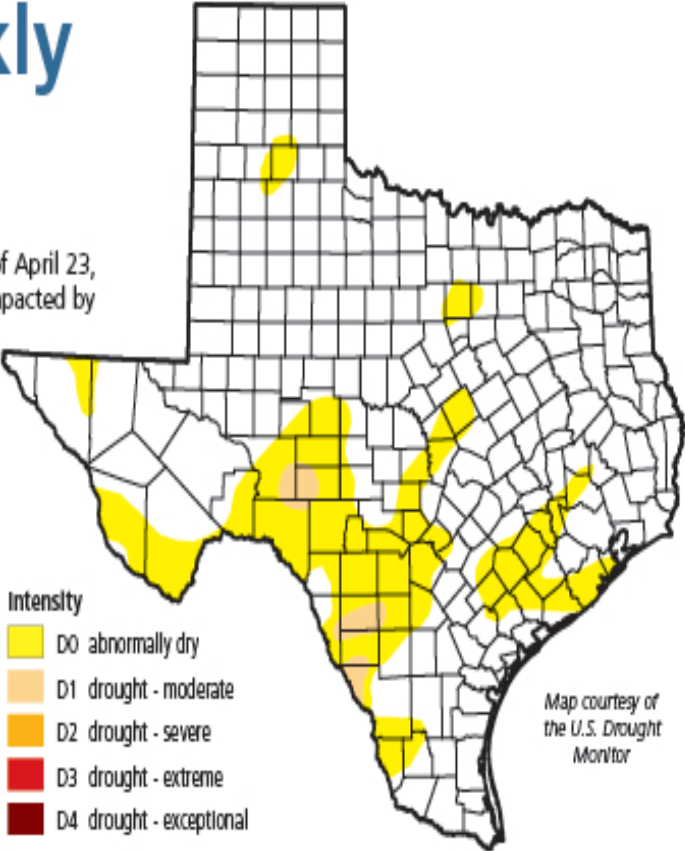
For the week of 04/29/19

Water conditions

The latest drought map, for conditions as of April 23, shows a little over 1 percent of the state impacted by drought, the lowest amount since late January. Drought is now restricted to three small pockets located in central and south central Texas.

Drought conditions

- 1% now
- 5% a week ago
- 2% three months ago
- 53% a year ago



Written by Dr. Mark Wentzel — Dr. Mark Wentzel is a hydrologist in the TWDB’s Office of Water Science and Conservation.

Bryan McMath, Governmental Relations | bryan.mcmath@twdb.texas.gov | 512-463-7850
Merry Klonower, Media Relations | merry.klonower@twdb.texas.gov | 512-463-8165

www.twdb.texas.gov

Stay connected:

